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REMARKS

The Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of the subject application and the indication that claims 54-56, 58, 61, 63-68, 70, and 71, if rewritten in independent format, would be in a condition for allowance. Applicants request reconsideration of the subject application based on the following remarks.

Claims 51-76, 118, 119, and 121-122 are currently pending in the application. Claims 51, 69, 118, and 119 have been amended and claim 123 has been cancelled. No new matter has been introduced by the instant claim amendments.

Referring to the outstanding Office Action, the rejection of claims 51-53, 57, 59-60, 62, 69, 72-76, 118-119, and 121-122 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Kindler (U.S. Patent 4,865,930) in view of Arnold (U.S. Patent 4,714,663) has been overcome.

Claims 51-53, 57, 59-60, 62, 69, 72-76, 118-119, and 121-124 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Kindler (U.S. Patent 4,865,930) in view of Arnold (U.S. Patent 4,714,663) and further in view of Linder (U.S. Patent 4,720,345).

In the interest of accelerating allowance of method claims directed to methods of making SPEMs in which the substrate polymer is a liquid crystalline polymer, claims 51, 118, and 119 have been amended. Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the position taken by the Examiner, claim 51 has been amended to provide methods of making SPEMs in which the substrate polymer is a liquid crystalline polymer.

None of the cited art, taken alone or in combination, teach SPEMs comprising a liquid crystalline polymer. Moreover, none of the cited art, taken alone or in combination, teach methods of making a SPEMs comprising a liquid crystalline polymer in which the SPEM is cast or extruded from a common solution of the liquid crystalline polymer and a polymeric ion-conductive material.

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Thus, claims 51, 118, and 119 are in a condition for allowance. Claims 52-76 and 121-122 depend from one of claims 51, 118, or 119 and are therefore also in a condition for allowance.

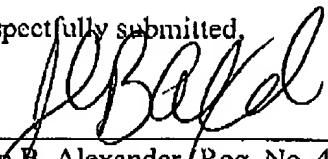
Applicants reserve the right to substantively address the asserted rejection of Kindler in view of Arnold and Linder as applied to methods of making a SPEM by casting or extruding a membrane from a common solution wherein the support polymer is selected from solvent soluble thermoset or thermoplastic aromatic polymer in a continuation application.

The claims are patentable, for at least the reasons discussed, over the prior art cited in the outstanding office action. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

Although it is not believed that any additional fees are needed to consider this submission, the Examiner is hereby authorized to charge our deposit account no. 04-1105 should any fee be deemed necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

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